

FRA may attach special conditions to the approval of the petition.

(5) Following the approval of a petition, FRA may reopen consideration of the petition for cause. Cause for reopening a petition includes such circumstances as a credible allegation of error or fraud, assumptions determined to be invalid as a result of in-service experience, or one or more unsafe events calling into question the safety analysis underlying the approval.

(h) *Under what circumstances may a third-party assessment be required, and by whom may it be conducted?* (1) The PSP must be supported by an independent third party assessment of the product when FRA concludes it is necessary based upon consideration of the following factors:

(i) Those factors listed in paragraphs (g)(2)(i) through (g)(2)(vii) of this section;

(ii) The sufficiency of the assessment or audit previously conducted at the election of a supplier or railroad; and

(iii) Whether applicable requirements of subparts A through G of this part are satisfied.

(2) As used in this section, “independent third party” means a technically competent entity responsible to and compensated by the railroad (or an association on behalf of one or more railroads) that is independent of the supplier of the product. An entity that is owned or controlled by the supplier, that is under common ownership or control with the supplier, or that is otherwise involved in the development of the product is not considered “independent” within the meaning of this section. FRA may maintain a roster of recognized technically competent entities as a service to railroads selecting reviewers under this section; however, a railroad is not limited to entities currently listed on any such roster.

(3) The third-party assessment must, at a minimum, consist of the activities and result in production of documentation meeting the requirements of Appendix D to this part. However, when requiring an assessment pursuant to this section, FRA specifies any requirements in Appendix D to this part which the agency has determined are not relevant to its concerns and, therefore, need not be included in the assessment.

The railroad shall make the final assessment report available to FRA upon request.

(i) *How may a PSP be amended?* A railroad may submit an amendment to a PSP at any time in the same manner as the initial PSP. Notwithstanding the otherwise applicable requirements found in this section and § 236.915, changes affecting the safety-critical functionality of a product may be made prior to the submission and approval of the PSP amendment as necessary in order to mitigate risk.

(j) *How may field testing be conducted prior to PSP approval?* (1) Field testing of a product may be conducted prior to the approval of a PSP by the submission of an informational filing by a railroad. The FRA will arrange to monitor the tests based on the information provided in the filing, which must include:

(i) A complete description of the product;

(ii) An operational concepts document;

(iii) A complete description of the specific test procedures, including the measures that will be taken to protect trains and on-track equipment;

(iv) An analysis of the applicability of the requirements of subparts A through G of this part to the product that will not apply during testing;

(v) The date testing will begin;

(vi) The location of the testing; and

(vii) A description of any effect the testing will have on the current method of operation.

(2) FRA may impose such additional conditions on this testing as may be necessary for the safety of train operations. Exemptions from regulations other than those contained in this part must be requested through waiver procedures in part 211 of this chapter.

[70 FR 11095, Mar. 7, 2005, as amended at 70 FR 72385, Dec. 5, 2005; 74 FR 25174, May 27, 2009]

§ 236.915 Implementation and operation.

(a) *When may a product be placed or retained in service?* (1) Except as stated in paragraphs (a)(2) and (a)(3) of this section, a railroad may operate in revenue service any product 180 days after filing with FRA the informational filing

for that product. The FRA filing date can be found in FRA's acknowledgment letter referred to in § 236.913(c)(2).

(2) Except as stated in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, if FRA approval is required for a product, the railroad shall not operate the product in revenue service until after the Associate Administrator for Safety has approved the petition for approval for that product pursuant to § 236.913.

(3) If after product implementation FRA elects, for cause, to treat the informational filing for the product as a petition for approval, the product may remain in use if otherwise consistent with the applicable law and regulations. FRA may impose special conditions for use of the product during the period of review for cause.

(b) *How does the PSP relate to operation of the product?* Each railroad shall comply with all provisions in the PSP for each product it uses and shall operate within the scope of initial operational assumptions and predefined changes identified by the PSP. Railroads may at any time submit an amended PSP according to the procedures outlined in § 236.913.

(c) *What precautions must be taken prior to interference with the normal functioning of a product?* The normal functioning of any safety-critical product must not be interfered with in testing or otherwise without first taking measures to provide for safe movement of trains, locomotives, roadway workers and on-track equipment that depend on normal functioning of such product.

(d) *What actions must be taken immediately upon failure of a safety-critical component?* When any safety-critical product component fails to perform its intended function, the cause must be determined and the faulty component adjusted, repaired, or replaced without undue delay. Until repair of such essential components are completed, a railroad shall take appropriate action as specified in the PSP. See also §§ 236.907(d), 236.917(b).

§ 236.917 Retention of records.

(a) *What life-cycle and maintenance records must be maintained?* (1) The railroad shall maintain at a designated office on the railroad:

(i) For the life-cycle of the product, adequate documentation to demonstrate that the PSP meets the safety requirements of the railroad's RSP and applicable standards in this subpart, including the risk assessment; and

(ii) An Operations and Maintenance Manual, pursuant to § 236.919; and

(iii) Training records pursuant to § 236.923(b).

(2) Results of inspections and tests specified in the PSP must be recorded as prescribed in § 236.110.

(3) Contractors of the railroad shall maintain at a designated office training records pursuant to § 236.923(b).

(b) *What actions must the railroad take in the event of occurrence of a safety-relevant hazard?* After the product is placed in service, the railroad shall maintain a database of all safety-relevant hazards as set forth in the PSP and those that had not been previously identified in the PSP. If the frequency of the safety-relevant hazards exceeds the threshold set forth in the PSP (see § 236.907(a)(6)), then the railroad shall:

(1) Report the inconsistency in writing (by mail, facsimile, e-mail, or hand delivery to the Director, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance, FRA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Mail Stop 25, Washington, DC 20590, within 15 days of discovery. Documents that are hand delivered must not be enclosed in an envelope;

(2) Take prompt countermeasures to reduce the frequency of the safety-relevant hazard(s) below the threshold set forth in the PSP; and

(3) Provide a final report to the FRA Director, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance, on the results of the analysis and countermeasures taken to reduce the frequency of the safety-relevant hazard(s) below the threshold set forth in the PSP when the problem is resolved.

[70 FR 11095, Mar. 7, 2005, as amended at 74 FR 25174, May 27, 2009]

§ 236.919 Operations and Maintenance Manual.

(a) The railroad shall catalog and maintain all documents as specified in the PSP for the installation, maintenance, repair, modification, inspection, and testing of the product and have